



THE NAVAJO NATION

OFFICE OF THE PRESIDENT & VICE PRESIDENT

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Miss America 2006 Jennifer Berry to visit Navajo Nation to talk to students about the dangers of underage drinking

WINDOW ROCK, Ariz. – Miss America 2006 Jennifer Berry will visit with Navajo students from several Navajo Nation schools when she makes a special appearance at the Ganado Pavilion on Friday, Oct. 27.

Her visit is in coordination with the Office of Navajo Nation First Lady Vikki Shirley to promote a message of preventing underage drinking and drunk driving.

“We were really excited when we were told she accepted the invitation to come to the Navajo Nation,” Mrs. Shirley said. “She wanted to bring a message that is similar to what I’m doing with Mothers Against Drunk Drivers. She’s an ambassador for Mothers Against Drunk Drivers. She is focusing on underage drinking, too. She wanted to work on this particular issue because she lost a best friend to a drunk driver.”

Jennifer Berry, 23, is from Tulsa, Okla., and was crowned Miss America on Jan. 21. She is a President’s Honor Roll student at the University of Oklahoma majoring in elementary education. Miss Berry’s ambition is to obtain a Master’s Degree in education and become an elementary school teacher.

When she was crowned Miss America, Miss Berry said her platform would be a message to prevent underage drinking and drunk driving. In March, she partnered with the national organization Mothers Against Drunk Driving.

As a new MADD national spokesperson, Miss America will promote her platform of “Building Intolerance to Drunk Driving and Underage Drinking” – the first of its kind in the history of Miss America.

“She will be talking to the high school students at Ganado High School. We will be bringing her there to speak to the students about the dangers of drinking,” Mrs. Shirley said.



Miss America 2006 Jennifer Berry

Miss America travels the country to talk about MADD and its lifesaving goals, including reducing drunk driving fatalities by 25 percent, supporting highly visible enforcement efforts, serving more victims/survivors of drunk driving and reducing binge drinking among college students in the next three years.

"We are honored to work with Miss America and are excited about the impact she will make," Glynn Birch, MADD national president, said at the time. "Jennifer will tackle tough issues that she knows well as a five-year volunteer for MADD on the state and local level in Oklahoma.

The more people we can reach together, the more lives we can save."

"MADD's mission is my mission," Miss Berry said. "With MADD as my platform partner, I will take every opportunity to raise awareness and educate the public about the dangers and consequences of drunk driving and underage drinking."

During July 4th weekend in 1999, Miss Berry's life changed forever when she received the tragic news that one of her high school girlfriends was killed in an underage drunk driving crash. Her 15-year-old friend and a handful of other teens were at the lake and had been drinking.

As they were heading to another party, the underage driver lost control of the car. Her friend, who was sitting in the back seat and unbelted, was killed instantly. The other teens were uninjured.

"The death of my friend has made a lasting mark on my life," she said. "It was the first funeral I ever attended and that experience sparked a need to do something to help save other lives. I hope to be able to use my title as Miss America to make a lasting mark for the better."

In 2004, 16,694 people were killed nationally in alcohol-related traffic crashes, accounting for 39 percent of all traffic crashes. Of those, 12,874 were killed in crashes where the driver had a .08 percent blood alcohol concentration or higher.

For more information, go to the Miss America and MADD websites at www.missamerica.org and www.madd.org.

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Underage Drinking and Drunk Driving Statistics Among College Students

Alcohol-related consequences for college students between the ages of 18-24

- **Death:** 1,700 die each year from alcohol-related unintentional injuries, including motor vehicle crashes.
- **Injury:** 599,000 are unintentionally injured under the influence of alcohol.
- **Assault:** More than 696,000 are assaulted by another student who has been drinking.
- **Sexual Abuse:** More than 97,000 are victims of alcohol-related sexual assault or date rape.
- **Unsafe Sex:** 400,000 have unprotected sex. More than 100,000 report having been too intoxicated to know if they consented to have sex.
- **Academic Problems:** About 25 percent of students report academic consequences of their drinking including missing class, falling behind, doing poorly on exams or papers, and receiving lower grades overall.
- **Health Problems/Suicide Attempts:** More than 150,000 develop an alcohol-related health problem.
- **Drunk Driving:** 2.1 million drive under the influence of alcohol each year.

Nearly half (48 percent) of all of the alcohol consumed by students attending 4-year colleges is consumed by underage students. Over two out of every five of all college students are binge drinkers.

In 2001, approximately 44 percent of college students reported binge drinking, in a college survey. This percentage is almost identical to rates in three previous surveys. College Alcohol Survey of four colleges indicated that binge-drinking levels are associated with ease of access to alcohol, price, special promotions, and outlet density in college communities.

Students who attended schools with high rates of heavy drinking experienced a greater number of secondhand effects, including disruption of sleep or studies, property damage, and verbal, physical, or sexual violence.

Drinking reduces the number of hours spent studying per day among college students. Each additional drink per occasion is associated with fifteen minutes less studying per day.

Binge drinking is associated with lower grades among college students. Approximately five drinks per occasion are associated with a GPA lower by half a grade.

Each additional drink consumed by college students per occasion increased the probability of missing a class by 8 percent and getting behind in school by 5 percent.

Approximately 6 percent of college students have been diagnosed as alcohol dependent and nearly one-third of students would be given an alcohol abuse diagnosis under psychiatric criteria. Approximately 44 percent of students reported at least one symptom of abuse.